

Union Township Environmental Commission
Meeting Minutes for January 12, 2009 @ 7:00 PM
DRAFT

I. Our notice as published in the HC Democrat and the Courier News satisfies the requirements of the Open Public Meeting Act. This notice is also posted on the Township website, and a copy is filed with the Municipal Clerk.

1. Roll call: Present were Bill Harclerode, Michele McBride, Chuck Neary, Sandy Stiger, Josh Boyle. Steve Hurford stated ahead of time that he would be late, and arrived at 7:58pm. Chuck Latournous arrived at 7:06pm. John Wingler and Kathy Corcoran were absent.
2. Approval of Minutes: Michele McBride moved to approve the minutes of the December 2009 meeting, Josh Boyle seconded; the minutes were approved.

II. **Annual Reorganization Announcement**: - Bill Harclerode was reappointed as Chair by Mayor Matt Severino. Bill nominated Michele McBride as Vice Chair, Secretary for 2010 is an open position. No one volunteered for the position; Michele agreed to take minutes for the January meeting, and UTEC plans to rotate the secretary position among members throughout the year.

III. **Old Business**

1. Trails- perimeter trail at Finn Parks (Michele) - The only item remaining to be done prior to formally staking out the new Finn Road trail remains the letter from our municipal attorney stating that the trail will not be a new use of the park. Michele stated that she would draft a letter stating that it is UTEC's opinion that the trail is not a new park use, ask our attorney to adopt and file it. Should be done by our February meeting
2. Environmental easement database (John, Chuck N.) – Bill forwarded an easement CD written by ANJEC to Chuck Neary for review. Sandy also has information regarding environmental easements which she will forward to Chuck. Bill thought that Lookout Pointe was well mapped out and could be a good place to start. He also mentioned that ANJEC has a 50% matching grant which we could potentially apply for to help hire an intern to identify easements from records in the county courthouse.
3. Stormwater management required education events (Michele) – Chuck has placed stormwater education information on the UTEC website. All other items necessary to complete our '10 points' required by NJDEP have been identified and most have been completed or planned; SBWA Watershed Cleanup is April 24; Michele encouraged UTEC members, friends and family to attend. Chuck agreed to work with UTEC school liaison to get the cleanup onto the Union Township School's backpack. Sandy agreed to contact SBWA and to act as the point person for the SBWA cleanup for UTEC.
4. UTEC Seminar proposal- invasive species and native plantings (Chuck N.) Chuck hopes to set up for April. Need speakers lined up by our March meeting to allow us to alert the media to the event.
5. Leaf Management (Michele) – Michele reviewed the "Union Township Leaf and Yard Waste Management" article with UTEC. She stated that it would be added to the UTEC website within the next week if there were no additions/ corrections noted by UTEC by the end of the week. She will also place it in the

newsletter. Josh agreed to contact Frank Mazza about working with the Road Crew to set up a 'Brush Clean up Day' at Finn Road Park.

IV. Correspondence

1. Entech (Thomas Furey, PE, 973-586-8661, Denville NJ) sent a letter offering to give us a presentation on solar electric panels for homeowners.
2. ANJEC Smart Growth Planning 50% Matching Grants are available for, among other things, ERI's, bicycle/pedestrian or trails, etc. Application packets are being sent out in mid-January.
3. We will be sending in ANJEC dues, commissioners filled out forms with contact info.
4. UTC and Planning Board introduced an ordinance to update the charges and fees for subdivisions, site plans, variances, etc. Copy available.
5. SBWA Annual Spring River Clean-Up is Saturday, April 24th.
6. Pattenburg Quarry: DEP granted them an Exemption under the Highlands Act for purposes of quarry reclamation. Proposed disturbance to steep slopes is deemed necessary to protect public health and safety. We need to contact Div of Land Use Regulation to address potential issues with the Category I stream on site. Bethlehem Township EC sent a letter to the owners expressing concern with the way fill was being handled. Bill stated that he would contact the new UT engineer and schedule a walk through for UTEC personnel.
7. Letter from PS&S consulting firm notifying UTEC that PSE&G will be submitting an application to perform infrastructure maintenance, etc. within freshwater wetlands, transition areas and state open waters, including cutting trees, vegetative maintenance, etc. along power line easements.
8. The CADB has ranked Union Twp's Stothoff Farm (lot 28 block 23, 63 acres) number 16 out of 27 on its list for priority farmland preservation.

V. New Business

1. Truck Depot application has received initial approval in Franklin Twp., Warren County and there appears to be potential impact to Union Twp. and Hunterdon County. Bill Harclerode is drafting a letter and will ask UTEC to sign onto it, for presentation to the Township Committee, opposing the plan on environmental grounds.
2. UTEC notified DEP and County Board of Health about a potential wetlands violation after receiving a report of a potential violation from a resident.
3. A motion was made and approved to establish meeting dates for 2010 as follows: (second Tuesday of the month at 7 PM):
 - February 9
 - March 9
 - April 13
 - May 11
 - June 8
 - July 13
 - August- no meeting, summer recess
 - September 14

October 12
November 9
December 14

VI. Chair's Report

1. Proposal was made by the chair to establish UTEC goals for 2010. The following goals were moved, seconded and approved as follows:
 - a. Property Stewardship- work with Town Committee and Freeholders to reach a decision on either preserving or demolishing unoccupied buildings at Hoffman Park and Milligan Farms by December 1.
 - b. Sustainable NJ- meet the certification goals by December 31. Involve other members of the community in this process.
 - c. Communication- issue at least two public newsletters this year. Update the UTEC website to include more environmental information. Hold at least one public interest seminar this year. (Chuck La Tournous and Josh will help Michele this year and potentially manage the second newsletter. The second newsletter may focus on Sustainable New Jersey. Michele is concerned about the length of time required to gain NJDEP approval of a Sidney Brook article; it may have to wait until the second newsletter.)
 - d. Increase public awareness of invasive species, stream water quality protection issues and the Sidney Brook Water Protection Plan, through public education events including hosting a booth at Community Day (if held this year).
 - e. Environmental easements- establish a priority for which easements to track first, and then begin entering data into a database.
 - f. Open Space monitoring- monitor at least an additional 6-8 additional properties this year and document for future comparative purposes.
 - g. Road Noise- restart regional efforts to reduce unmuffled truck engine braking noise from Route 78 with the goal of either increasing enforcement or getting at least one bill passed by the NJ Senate or Assembly.
 - h. Public Access Trails - establish a perimeter trail on at least one open space property this year.
 - i. Highlands- support Town Committee efforts and strategies to bring local master plans and development regulations into conformance with the "goals, requirements and provisions of the regional master plan".
 - j. Seek out and apply for at least two grant programs in 2010. Select grants that that bring value to Union Township residents at minimal to no additional cost.
 - k. Hold an annual well test day utilizing the help of the SBWA.

VII. Reports of Subcommittees

1. Open Space (Sandy Stiger, Chuck Neary) – plan to monitor and document 6-8 additional open space properties in 2010.
2. Property Stewardship (Michele McBride)
 - I. Hoffman Park – The RFP for the Hoffman House was on the agenda for the January 19 Freeholder's Meeting. Michele to attend, other UTEC

members invited to attend. The Stewardship subcommittee has completed a draft of a RFP for the Hoffman North Barns; Michele to issue for review within the next week.

- II. Douglas – Anticipated that the auction sale will close before the end of January.
 - III. Milligan Farms – Stewardship will tackle disposition of the Milligan farmhouse next; plans are to open the house to assess condition when the weather warms above freezing.
3. Planning Board Report (Kathleen Corcoran) – Kathy was not present; Bill briefly reported on items on the planning board agenda.
 4. Transportation (Bill Harclerode) - local Road Noise group is reorganizing. Community impression is that the rubberized asphalt has noticeably reduced road noise.
 5. Communication / Education (Michele Mc Bride, Chuck La Tournous)
 - a. Newsletter – Meeting scheduled with Neil Davis for later in January to block out newsletter; articles are planned and several have been written. Michele will begin soliciting advertising later this month – will be done by a combination of email, letters, and visits to commercial establishments. Bill to do Chair's letter. State mandates publication of information on the Sidney Brook grant; newsletter release may be affected by Sidney Brook report timing.
 - b. Website – Chuck La Tournous is attempting to obtain statistics about our website hits per month; and is considering improvements to make it easier to use.
 6. Sidney Brook Project 319h Grant (Chuck Neary, Bill Harclerode) - Next meeting of stakeholders (not public) is scheduled for January 26. At that meeting, Dr. Souza will review results of chemical and biological testing.
 7. UTC Highlands Committee (Kathy Corcoran, Bill Harclerode) - petition to HWPPC for conformance in both the Planning and Preservation Area was submitted on Dec 8.
 7. Sustainable NJ Certification (C. La Tournous) – First meeting on January 26. Two residents are interested in joining the committee. Action items have been identified.

Hearing of Citizens - none

Adjournment - The meeting was adjourned at 8:23pm.